AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims without prejudice, without admission, without surrender of subject matter, and without any intention of creating any estoppel as to equivalents, as follows.

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for preparing powdered cellulose ethers which comprises: ~~by~~

(a) dispersing an alkalinizing agent ~~caustic soda~~ into pulverized celluloses to form alkalinized cellulose; ~~and injecting an etherifying agent, wherein the method comprises steps of:~~

(b) ~~(a)~~ performing a primary reaction on the alkalinized cellulose from (a) ~~in the condition of~~ gradually increasing temperature ranging from 40 to 60 ℃ for 10 to 60 min after adding 0.01-3.0 parts by weight of etherifying agent for 1 part by weight of cellulose to form a primary reaction mixture;

(c) ~~(b)~~ performing a secondary reaction on the primary reaction mixture from (b) ~~in the condition of~~ gradually increasing temperature ranging from 45 to 75 ℃ for 60 to 180 min to form a secondary reaction mixture; and

(d) ~~(c)~~ performing a tertiary reaction on the secondary reaction mixture from (c) ~~in the condition of~~ gradually increasing temperature ranging from 80 to 90 ℃ for 60 to 180 min,
thereby producing the powdered cellulose ethers ~~fine powdered cellulose~~.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the reaction temperatures of the primary, secondary and tertiary reactions are ranging from 40 to 50 ℃, 55 to 65 ℃, and 85 to 90 ℃, respectively.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the etherifying agent is alkyleneoxide or alkylhalide.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the alkyleneoxide has carbon atoms ranging from 2 to 4, and the alkylene halide has carbon atoms ranging from 1 to 5.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, which further comprises injecting a diluent gas before adding an etherifying agent.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the diluent gas is at least one ether compound(s) selected from dimethylether and diethylether.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the diluent gas is injected less than 2.5 parts by weight for 1 part by weight of cellulose, ~~and it is preferable not to use a diluent gas to produce cellulose ether with improved quality~~.

8-13. (Canceled)

14. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein (d) further comprises filtering the secondary reaction mixture from (c), after gradually increasing temperature ranging from 80 to 90 ℃ for 60 to 180 min, to form a filtered product and drying the filtered product, wherein (d) does not further comprise a grinding step.

15. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the powdered cellulose ethers have a bulk density ranging from 0.45 to 0.65 g/mL.

16. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the powdered cellulose ethers have a particle distribution rate of greater than 99% for the particles of less than 100 mesh in size.

17. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the powdered cellulose ethers have a bulk density ranging from 0.45 to 0.65 g/mL.

18. (New) A method of claim 1, wherein the alkalizing agent is alkalimetal hydroxide (caustic soda).

19. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the the alkalizing agent is alkalimetal hydroxide (caustic soda) and wherein the powdered cellulose ethers:

have a bulk density ranging from 0.45 to 0.65 g/mL; and

have a particle distribution rate of greater than 99% for the particles of less than 100 mesh in size.